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Bearcats Claim Back-To-Back District Titles

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By Andrew Cato, ShowMe Times Sports Editor

For the first time in over 20 years, the Dexter Bearcats have won back-to-back District Championships with a 35-0 win against the Fredericktown Black Cats. The Bearcat offense racked up 396 yards in the contest, while the defense pitched a shutout and held the Black Cats to 181 yards of total offense.

Head coach Aaron Pixley was very excited with his team's performance in the game.

"We gave up a few big runs early in the game, but we had a good stop down inside the 10 yard line," he said. "We got the ball and did a good job of taking down the field and scoring, and then we got rolling."

The Bearcats prolific running attack was somewhat slowed by Fredericktown's defense, with 204 yards on the ground, but the air attack of the Bearcats was able to pick apart the Black Cats' man-to-man coverage.

"Fredericktown's very physical; they do some things that are tough to overcome, and we had to make some adjustments in the running game on offense," Pixley noted. "Our passing game was excellent tonight as well. We had some good match-ups out there, and we spread the ball around pretty good. Tyler [Miller], Jake [Lee], Chase [Young], and Cody [Neldon] all did a good job of making plays when they caught the football. The

offensive line protected well for the most part, and Cody threw the ball on the money as good as he has all year. ”

“Our running backs had to make adjustments on the fly,” he continued. “We did a good job of setting the edge with fullbacks, and both tailbacks did a good job of getting out there. Josh [Overall], Nick [Summers], and Cody [Stevens] out there making that adjustment in the running game, that’s a credit to them.”

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yards and 2 touchdowns through the air, and he also racked up 157 yards on 17 carries and a touchdown on the ground.

“We played good tonight. I give Fredericktown’s defense props - they stopped the run, so we had to break out the pass,” Stevens said. “We passed pretty good tonight, and that’s how it has to be. They were playing man the whole night - you could see it every play. They didn’t roll a safety over the top all night, so we just ran ins and outs all night against it.”

Tyler Miller led the Bearcats’ receiving corps with 109 yards on 4 catches and 1 touchdown. Junior Chase Young had 2 catches for 37 yards and a touchdown.

“We played pretty good tonight,” Miller said. “Defense made some really big stops, especially in the red zone during the first half, we just played really well all four quarters. We thought coming into this game we’d be able to pass well. We scouted their defense, and saw that they did a lot of man coverage - we like [throwing against] that.”

The Bearcat defense, putting up their second shutout of the year, and fifth game holding opponents to seven points or less, were led by linebacker Zach Watson with 10 total tackles, while Nick Summers racked up 7 tackles.

The ‘Cats won the turnover battle again this week, with 4 takeaways. Summers recovered 2 fumbles, one of which he forced, while Ryan Joyner and Cody Neldon both picked off Fredericktown quarterback Jeremy Gremminger.

“Defensively, I think we played better and better as the game went on, and we did a great job of holding them to no points,” Pixley said.

The ‘Cats have officially broken three records this season: points scored in a season, with

448; rushing yardage, with 2,967; and total yards per game, with a 434.2 yard average. The 'Cats also had a nine win season for the first time in Coach Pixley's 12 year tenure.

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"It's very difficult to go undefeated in football, it's very difficult to win nine games. For these boys to win nine games, it's a credit to their hard work and sacrifice this season, and over the last few years," Pixley said. "Nothing is easy in this game - we're not perfect. I still think we can be a better football team, but at the same time, they have done a great job of staying together and executing on both sides of the ball and special teams. I'm very proud of them - they're District Champions, and they deserve it."

With the win, the Bearcats sealed home-field advantage next week, when they host the runner-up from District 2, the Park Hills Central Rebels.

The Bearcats already hold a 37-27 win over PHC in the second week of the season, but Pixley noted them as being a much-improved team.

"We'll host Park Hills next week," he said. "They're a big, strong, physical team. We're going to have to play well to win it. There are no more easy games; everything is do or die. If you win, you keep going; if you lose, you go home."

Stevens reflected his coaches attitude about the Rebels after the game, but noted his desire to carry the team to more than a District Championship.

"It's special - it's always special, especially since it's my senior year," he said, "but I'm not satisfied yet. I want to get another win, get some more wins and keep going. I want to see how far we can get. I'm not satisfied yet."

The 'Cats will host Park Hills Central next Wednesday (Nov. 2) night in the opening round of the playoffs. Kickoff is scheduled for 7:00 p.m.

For a full breakdown of the game's stats, [click here.](#)

For the complete stats from the 2011 Bearcat Football season, [click here.](#)

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